THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) Government has been reiterating India's position on Pakistan's proposal for setting up of South Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone at all relevant multilateral fora and in bilateral discussions with the representatives of various countries including the republics constituting CIS and the countries in our neighbourhood.

Fear of Indo-Pak Nuclear War

2725. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention was drawn to the statement of CIA Director Mr. R. Gates before a Congressional Committee, as reported in the *Times of India* dated December 12, 1991 expressing his fear of an Indo-Pak Nuclear War; and

(b) if so, what is the Government's information about Mr. Gates assessment of the situation and the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir. Govt, have noted the Press reports on this matter.

(b) Govt, are curious about this statement and after examining the actual text have issued a response contained in the enclosed statement by the official spokesman.

Statement

Spokesman's Statement on Mr. Robert Gates, Director, CIA's Statement before the US Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs

While briefing newsmen, the Spokesman said that Government's attention has been drawn to the statement made on January the 15th, Mr. Robert Gates, The Director of the Centra) Intelligence Agency (CIA), before the US Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs. India is curious about some remarks that Mr. Gates had made. India would like to put the record straight on a number of issues raised by Mr. Gates.

In the first place, the Spokesman said, India does not possess nuclear weapons. India's nuclear programme is totally dedicated to the peaceful uses of atomic energy. India does not have chemical weapons or a chemical weapons programme. India was one of the first countries to sign the 1925 Geneva Protocol on the non-use of chemical weapons. Presently India is working closely with a number of delegations in the Conference on Disarmament to conclude by this year a Convention to Ban Chemical Weapons. India has banned the export of chemicals that could be used as chemical weapons precursors. India has repeatedly advocated with Pakistan the signing of a bilateral agreement to ban the development, production, deployment and use of chemical weapons.

India's Integrated Missile Development Programme is indigenous.-India does not depend on other countries in this matter. Indeed, India is one of the largest producers of some of those advanced materials, and, hence, the question of their import does not arise. India has not transferred or sold any of the technologies involved, in spite of many requests to do so.

India and the Commonwealth of Independant States, have a continuing programme of exchange of scientists in open areas of scientific research and development. India has adequate scientific manpower for her needs and has little need for any equivalent of 'Operation Paper Clip'.

NEW DELHI

Dated: 28-01-1992

Dangers posed to Peace due to disintegration of Soviet Union

2726. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item that appeared in the *Times of India* dated 20th December, 1991 captioned "who controls the Soviet Nuclear button", wherein it has been stated that no one knows that is the Soviet chain of

commands over nuclear weapons perhaps not even the Soviets;

(b) whether Government have made any assessment of dangers posed to peace due to disintegration of Soviet Union and taken up the matter in international forum;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Prime Minister in his address at the Summit Meeting of the Security Council shared the concerns expressed by several leaders on the threat posed to international peace and security by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and noted in this regard that the possible loss of control over nuclear arsenals and the dangers of an uncontrolled spread of ready-made nuclear weapons across the globe by a variety of means and methods had added a qualitatively and frighteningly new dimension to the proliferation issue.

Opening of Israeli Embassy at New Delhi

2727. Dr. NARREDDLY THULASI REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to allow to open Israeli Embassy at New Delhi; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir. Following the establishment of full diplomatic relations with Israel, Government have agreed to the opening of an Israeli Embassy in New Delhi.

(b) With the appointment of a Charge d'Affaires on February 13, 1992, the Embassy of Israel has officially started functioning.

Pakistan High Commissioner's views for Resolving Bilateral Issues

2728. SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the remarks made by Mr. Abdul Sattar, the Pakistan High Commissioner at the Rotary Club of Allahabad on Saturday, January 13, 1992 suggesting reference of various unresolved bilateral issues defying bipartitie solution including Kashmir issues to an arbitration tribunal; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Government have seen reports in this regard.

(b) Government are committed to the Simla Agreement under which all differences with Pakistan are to be resolved bilaterally and peacefully. There is no scope for any outside or third party involvement of any sort.

Denial of Visas by Indian Missions Abroad

2729. SHRI BHADRESWAR BURAGOHAIN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that a good number of tourist groups have applied visa to visit Assam to witness the world famous one horned Rhino at Kaziranga National Park;

(b) whether most of them were denied visas by the Indian Missions abroad due to Restricted Area Permit system in the North Eastern Region; and

(c) what are the number of visas granted by the Indian Embassy in Berne, Switzerland in 1991-92 and the total number of applications received by the mission in Switzerland?